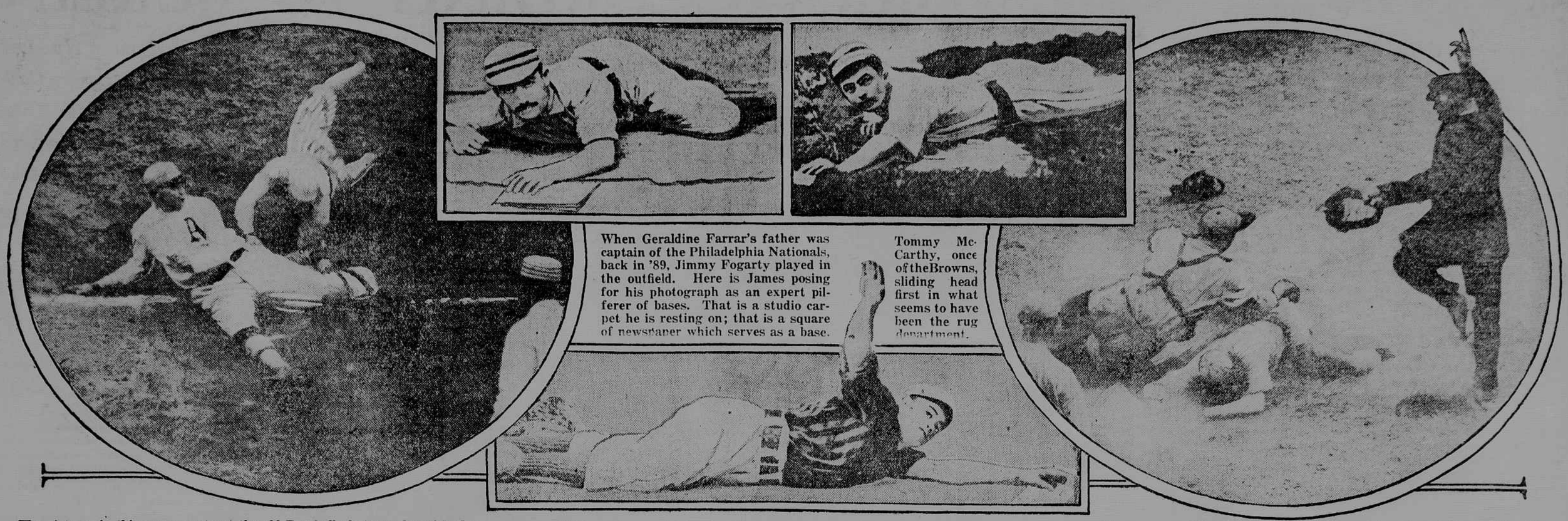
WHEN BASES WERE STOLEN ON STUDIO RUGS



When Geraldine Farrar's father was captain of the Philadelphia Nationals, back in '89, Jimmy Fogarty played in the outfield. Here is James posing for his photograph as an expert pilferer of bases. That is a studio carpet he is resting on; that is a square of newspaper which serves as a base.

Tommy McCarthy, once of the Browns, sliding head first in what seems to have been the rug department.

The pictures in this group contrast the old Baseball photography with the new. The new is instantaneous, on the field—no need to tell you that. The old was time exposure, posed in a studio.

Collins, who caught for the Giants thirty-three years ago, a contemporary of Buck Ewing, has his hand raised in appeal to the umpire. There was no umpire present; but that gesture was a master stroke of studio realism.

The camera of Tim Keefe's day never caught such activity as this. Base runners made appointments with photographers and "looked pleasant" until told to get up. Sliding in those days was done head foremost.

THIRTY-FIVE years ago there was much juvenile barter in pictures which illustrated what might be termed the second, or middle, era of baseball photography. In the first era, when beards and long trousers prevailed, there was little or no attempt to illustrate the sport. The members of a team were arranged in a solid bank of more or less attractiveness, and, after he had made sure that the whiskers of each player were going to show, the photographer took the leather cap off the lens and there was a wait of several seconds, during which no athlete dared flutter an eyelid.

In the next era the players were photographed individually in attitudes which gave some faint hint of the nature of the sport in which they engaged. They were taken, in spotless uniforms, to carefully dusted studios, and the rest was left to the ingenuity of the photographer. Thus, when Jimmy Fogarty, the brilliant outfielder and star base runner of the old Philadelphia Nationals, was carefully spread out on a rug, with one outstretched hand resting on a square of newspaper representing that goal of goals, the home plate, even the dullest beholder of the resulting photograph would know that Mr. Fogarty was portraying his specialty—the theft of the deciding run in a close game.

Likewise when Center Fielder McCarthy of the champion St. Louis Browns stretched out his hand from a tangle of imitation grass for the same studio home plate and with upraised head looked into the camera with the gaze of one who is trying to remember whether he is meeting Brown or Smith there could be no doubt that he was emulating Mr. Fogarty in the specialty of base running. Let it not be supposed that the Fogarty-McCarthy turtle-like pose exhausted the resources of the photographer of that day. When Catcher Collins, wearing the famous striped livery of the old New York team, was draped along the floor in a sliding pose, a realistic touch was added by having him raise his hand, as if appealing to the umpire for favorable judgment.

Such pictures, which were eagerly sought by the baseball-mad youths of the day, were put out as prizes in cigarette packages. Many a boy who scorned to collect stamps or anything of a similarly sissified nature had his pockets bulging with these cards, which smelled delightfully of tobacco until they had become old and worn from much trading.

Then some genius discovered that a rapidly moving slit of light along a dry plate covered with fast emulsion would show a bolt of lightning at the exact instant of connecting with the iron rod which at one time represented the investment of a large proportion of rural funds. Mr. Fogarty, Mr. McCarthy and Mr. Collins and their base-running contemporaries, the Stoveys, Nicols and Welches, had disappeared from the scene. The head first slide, in which they specialized, had been discarded. Instead of letting the baseman implant his spikes on the head or hands of the runner, the matter had been reversed. The base runner was sliding feet first and spikes foremost. Photographs taken outdoors in the third era of photography showed results that differed materially from those achieved by the studio photographer. The sliders, and those who were slid into, were shown in grotesque attitudes. Their legs and arms were flung about with abandon, and their expressions were comic or tragic, according to the fleeting impressions of that dusty moment of meeting at the base. Even the umpire, graceful enough to the slower vision of the eyes, was caught doing some most awkward hopping to get out of the way of hurtling spikes.

Some of the old-time pictures are left. Occasionally a gray-haired enthusiast drags one out of an inner pocket and looks it over fondly. It may be a studio picture of a catcher, posed against a painted background showing a marble stairway festooned with trailing arbutus. The catcher is languidly awaiting the arrival of a baseball suspended by a string from the ceiling. Or it may be a picture of a batsman, posed according to the rules and regulations of the living statuary at the circus. But such pictures, when contrasted with the action pictures of to-day, have more than mere sentimental value. They tell of the advance in photography more eloquently than all the wordage of the largest and latest textbook.

THE HEART OF LITTLE SHIKARA

By EDISON MARSHALL

I

IF IT hadn't been for a purple moon that came peering up above the dark jungle just at nightfall, it would have been impossible to tell that Little Shikara was at his watch. He was really just the color of the shadows—a rather pleasant brown—he was very little, indeed, and besides he was standing very, very still. But the moon did show him—peering down through the leaf clusters of the heavy vines—and shone very softly in his wide-open dark eyes.

Little Shikara, son of Khoda Dunnoo, was waiting for the return of a certain idol and demigod who was even now riding home in his howdah from the tiger hunt.

It was almost like taking part in some great hunt himself—to be waiting at the gate for the return of Warwick Sahib. Even now the elephant came striding out of the shadows; and Little Shikara could see the trophy. The hunt had indeed been successful, and the boy's glowing eyes beheld—even in the shadows—the largest and most beautiful tiger skin he had ever seen. It was the great Nahar, the royal tiger, who had killed one hundred cattle from nearby fields.

Warwick Sahib rode in his howdah, and he did not seem to see the village people that came out to meet him.

But it was quite the way of Warwick Sahib to sweep his gray, tired-out eyes over a scene and seemingly perceive nothing; yet in reality absorbing every detail with the accuracy of a photographic plate. He was just a great sportsman who was also an English gentleman, and he had learned certain lessons of impassiveness from the wild. Only one of the brown faces he beheld was worth a lingering glance. And when he met that one his eyes halted in their sweeping survey—and Warwick Sahib smiled.

THAT face was the brown, eager visage of Little Shikara.

It was only the faintest of quiet, tolerant smiles; but it meant more to the boy than almost any kind of honor could have meant to the prematurely gray man in the howdah. The latter passed on to his estate.

The beaters assembled in a circle under a tree, and most of the villagers gathered to hear the story. Little Shikara slipped in among them and listened with both outstanding little ears. Warwick Sahib had dismounted from his elephant as usual, the beaters said, and with but one attendant had advanced up the bed of a dry creek. This was quite like Warwick Sahib, and Little Shikara felt himself tingling again. Other hunters shot their tigers from the security of the howdah; but this wasn't Warwick's way of doing. The male tiger had risen snarling from his lair and had been felled at the first shot.

Warwick Sahib's tiger hunts were usually just simple and expeditious affairs.

But to-day there had been a curious epilogue. Just as the beaters had started toward the fallen animal, and the white Heaven-born's cigarette case was open in his hand, Nahara, Nahar's great tawny mate, had suddenly sprung forth from the bamboo thickets.

SHE drove straight to the nearest of the beaters. There was no time whatever for Warwick to take aim. His rifle leaped, like a live thing, in his arms, but not one of the horrified beaters had seen his eyes lower to the sights. The bullet went home—they could tell by the way the tiger flashed to her breast in the grass.

Yet she was only wounded.

It was almost a miracle that he had hit the great cat at all. At once the thickets had closed around her, and the beaters had been unable to drive her forth again.

The circle was silent thereafter. They seemed to be waiting for Khusru, one of the head men of the village, to give his opinion.

"We will not be in the honored service of the Protector of the Poor at this time a year from now," he said.

They all waited tensely. Shikara shivered. "Speak, Khusru," they urged him.

"Warwick Sahib will go again to the jungles—and Nahara will be waiting. She owes two debts. One is the killing of her mate—and ye know that these two tigers have been long and faithful mates. Do ye think she will let that debt go unpaid? She will also avenge her own wound."

"Perhaps she will die of bleeding," one of the others suggested.

"Nay, or ye would have found her this afternoon. One day, and he will go forth in pursuit of her again; and then ye will not see him riding back so grandly on his elephant. Perhaps she will come here, to carry away our children."

Again Shikara tingled—hoping that Nahara would at least come close enough to cause excitement. And that night, too happy to keep silent, he told his mother of Warwick Sahib's smile. "And some time I—I, thine own son," he said as sleepiness came upon him, "will be a killer of tigers, even as Warwick Sahib."

"And where, little hawk, wilt thou procure thine elephants and such rupees as are needed?"

"Warwick Sahib shoots from the ground—and so will I. And sometimes he goes forth with only one attendant—and I will not need even one. And who can say—perhaps he will find me even a bolder man than Gunga Singhai; and he will take me in his place on the hunts in the jungles."

For Gunga Singhai was Warwick Sahib's own personal attendant and gun carrier—the native that the Protector of the Poor could trust in the tightest places. So it was only to be expected that Little Shikara's mother should laugh at him. The idea of her son being an attendant of Warwick Sahib, not to mention a hunter of tigers, was only a tale to tell her husband when the boy's bright eyes were closed in sleep.

"Nay, little man," she told him. "Would I want thee torn to pieces in Nahara's claws? Would I want thee smelling of the jungle again, as thou didst after chasing the water-buck through the bamboos? Nay; thou wilt be a herdsman, like thy father, and perhaps gather many rupees."

A half mile distant, in his richly furnished bungalow, Warwick Sahib dozed over his after-dinner cigar. He was in evening clothes, and crystal and silver glittered on his board. But his gray eyes were half closed, and the gleam from his plate could not pass the long, dark lashes. For his spirit was far distant, too—on the jungle trails with that of Little Shikara.

II

ONE sunlit morning, perhaps a month after the skin of Nahar was brought in from the jungle, Warwick Sahib's mail was late. It was an unheard of thing. Always before, just as the clock struck 8, he would hear the cheerful tinkle of the postman's bells. At first he considered complaining, but as morning drew to early afternoon he began to believe that investigation would be the wiser course.

The postman's route carried him along an old elephant trail through a patch of thick jungle beside one of the tributaries of the Manipur. When natives went out to look he was neither on the path nor drowned in the creek, nor yet in his thatched hut at the other end of his route. The truth was that this particular postman's bells would never be heard by human ears again. And there was enough evidence in the wet mold of the trail to know what had occurred.

Nahara, a fairly respectable cattle-killer before, had become in a single night one of the worst terrors of India. Of course she was still a coward, but she had learned, by virtue of a chance meeting with a postman on a trail after a week of heart-devouring starvation, two or three extremely portentous lessons. One of them was that not even the little deer, drinking beside the Manipur, died half so easily as these tall, forked forms of which she had previously been so afraid. She found out also that they could neither run swiftly nor walk silently, and they could be approached easily even by a tiger that cracked a twig with every step. It simplified the problem of living immensely; and, just as any other feline would have done, she took the line of least resistance.

SHE knew enough not to confine herself to one village. Perhaps it was because she had learned that a determined hunt, with many beaters and men on elephants, invariably followed her killings. She found out also that, just as a doe is easier felled than a horned buck, certain of this new kind of game were more easily taken than the others. Sometimes children played at the door of their huts, and sometimes old men could not flee at all. All these things Nahara learned, and in learning them she caused a certain civil office of the British Empire to put an exceedingly large price on her head.

Often the hunting was poor, and sometimes she went many days in a stretch without making a single kill. And in all beasts, high and low, this instills a curious, terrible kind of blood-lust—to kill, not once, but as many times as possible in the same hunt. It is the instinct that makes a little weasel kill all the chickens in a coop when one was all it could possibly carry away, and that will cause a wolf to leap from sheep to sheep in a fold until every one is dead. Nahara didn't get a chance to kill every day, so when the opportunity did come she killed as many times as she could in quick succession. And the British Empire raised the price on her head.

One afternoon found her within a half-mile of Warwick's bungalow, and for five days she had gone without food.

EXCESSIVE hunger in most of the flesh-eating animals is really a first cousin to madness. Starvation brings recklessness, a desperate, frenzied courage that is likely to upset all of one's preconceived notions as to the behavior of animals. It also brings, so that all men may be aware of its presence, a peculiar lurid glow to the balls of the eyes.

The two pale circles of fire were the most noticeable characteristics of the long, tawny cat that crept through the bamboos. Except for them, she would hardly have been discernible at all. The yellow grass made a perfect background, her black stripes looked like the streaks of shadow between the stalks of bamboo, and for one that is lame she crept with an astounding silence. One couldn't have believed that such a great creature could lie so close to the earth and be so utterly invisible in the low thickets.

SOON a villager, who had been working in Warwick's fields, came trotting in Oriental fashion across the meadow. His eyes were only human, and he did not see the tawny shape in the tall grass.

The man was already in leaping range, but the tiger had learned, in many experiences, always to make sure. Just as the clear outlines of an object that has long been concealed in a maze of light and shadows will often leap, with sudden vividness, to the eyes, the native caught the whole dread picture—the crouching form, the terrible blue lights of the eyes, the whipping tail. The gasp he uttered from his closing throat seemed to act like the fall of a firing pin against a shell on the bunched muscles of the animal, and she left her covert in a streak of tawny light.

But Nahara's leaps had never been quite accurate since she had been wounded by Warwick's bullet, months before. Her lame paw always seemed to disturb her balance. By remembering it she could usually partly overcome the disadvantage; but to-day, in the madness of her hunger, she had been unable to remember anything except the terrible rapture of killing. The Burman had seen the tiger just before she leaped, and although there had been no time for conscious thought his guardian reflexes had flung him to one side in a single frenzied effort to miss the full force of the spring.

The result of both these things was that he received only an awkward, sprawling blow from the animal's shoulder. He was hurled to the ground, for no human body in the world is built to withstand the ton or so of shocking power of a 300-pound cat leaping through the air. The tigress sprawled down also, and because she lighted on her wounded paw she squealed with pain. It was possibly three seconds before she had forgotten the stabbing pain in her paw and had gathered herself to spring on the unconscious form of the native. And that three seconds gave Warwick Sahib, sitting at the window of his study, an opportunity to seize his rifle and fire.

Warwick knew tigers, and he had kept the rifle always ready for just such a need as this. The distance was nearly five hundred yards, and the bullet went wide of its mark. Nevertheless, it saved the native's life. The great cat remembered this same far-off explosion from another day, in a dry creek-bed of months before, and the sing of the bullet was a remembered thing too. Courage fled and she turned and raced into the bamboos.

In an instant, Warwick was on his great veranda, calling his beaters. Gunga Singhai slipped shells into the magazine of his master's high-calibered close-range tiger rifle. "The elephant, Sahib?" he asked swiftly.

"Nay, this will be on foot. Make the beaters circle about the fringe of bamboos. Thou and I will cross the eastern fields and shoot at her as she breaks through."

A little brown boy shivered at his words and wondered if the beaters would turn and kick him, as they had always done before, if he should attempt to follow them. It was the tiger-hunt, in view of his own village, and he sat down tremulous with rapture in the grass to watch. It was almost as if his dream—that he himself should be a hunter of tigers—was coming true. He wondered why the beaters seemed to move so slowly and with so little heart.

He would have known if he could have looked into their eyes. Each black pupil was framed with white. Human hearts grow shaken and bloodless from such sights as this they had just seen, and only the heart of a jungle creature—the heart of the eagle that the jungle gods, by some unheard-of fortune, had put in the breast of Little Shikara—could prevail against them.

III

WARWICK SAHIB and Singhai disappeared at once into the fringe of jungle, and silence immediately fell upon them. The cries of the beaters at once seemed curiously dim. It was as if no sound could live in the great silences under the arching trees. Soon it was as if they were alone.

They walked side by side, Warwick with his rifle held ready. He had no false ideas in regard to this tiger hunt. He knew that his prey was desperate with hunger, and that she would charge on sight.

He walked rather quietly, yet with no conscious effort toward stealth. The rifle rested easily in his arms, his gray eyes were quiet and thoughtful as always. Singularly, his splendid features were quite in repose. The Burman, however, had more of the outer signs of alertness, and yet there was none of the blind terror upon him that marked the beaters.

"Where are the men?" Warwick asked quietly. "It is strange that we do not hear them shouting."

"They are afraid, Sahib," Singhai replied. "The forest pigs have left us to do our own hunting."

Warwick corrected him with a smile. "Forest pigs are brave enough," he answered. "They are sheep—just sheep—sheep of the plains."

The broad trail divided, like a three-tined candlestick, into narrow trails. Warwick halted beside the center of the three that led to the creek they were obliged to cross. Just for an instant he stood watching, gazing into the deep blue dusk of the deeper jungle.

"There is little use of going on," he said. "It is growing too dark. But there will be killings before the dawn if we don't get her first."

THE servant stood still, waiting. It was not his place to advise his master.

"If we leave her she'll come again before the dawn. Many of the herders haven't returned—she'll get one of them sure. At least we may cross the creek and get a view of the great fields. She is certain to cross them if she has heard the beaters."

In utter silence they went on. One hundred yards further they came to the creek, and both strode in together to ford.

The water was only knee-deep, but Warwick's boots sank three inches in the mud of the bottom.

Singhai suddenly splashed down into the water, on his hands and knees. He did not cry out. But the thing that brought home the truth to Warwick was the pain that flashed, vivid as lightning, across his dark face; and the horror of death that left its shadow. Something churned and writhed in the mud, and then Warwick fired.

Both of them had forgotten Mugger, the crocodile, that so loves to wait in the mud of a ford. He had seized Singhai's foot, and had already snatched him down into the water when Warwick fired. No living flesh can withstand the terrible, rending shock of a high-powered sporting rifle at close range. Mugger had plates of armor, but even these could not have availed against it if he had been exposed to the fire. As it was, several inches of water stood between, a more effective armor than a two-inch steel plate on a battleship. The shock carried through, a smashing blow that caused the reptile to release his hold on Singhai's leg, but before the native could get to his feet he had struck again. The next instant both men were fighting for their lives.

They fought with their hands, and Warwick fought with his rifle, and the native slashed again and again with the long knife that he carried at his belt.

The reptile was only half grown, but in the water they had none of the usual advantages that man has over the beasts with which he does battle. Warwick could not find a target for his rifle. But even human bodies, usually so weak, find themselves possessed of an amazing reserve strength and agility in the moment of need. These men realized perfectly that their lives were the stakes for which they fought, and they gave every ounce of strength and energy they had. Their aim was to hold the mugger off until they could reach the shore.

At last, by a lucky stroke, Singhai's knife blinded one of the lurid, reptile eyes. He was prone in the water when he administered it, and it went home just as the savage teeth were snapping at his throat. For an instant the great reptile flopped in an impotent half-circle, partly reared out of the water. It gave Warwick a chance to shoot, a single instant in

Continued on next page